## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



## **COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Food Safety Tips for Summer Grilling**

**San Bernardino:** During the summertime, it is very important to practice safe food handling. The warmer weather is great for picnics and barbecues, but it also provides an ideal environment for bacteria in food to quickly multiply and cause foodborne illness.

Summer grilling is a popular activity in San Bernardino County, especially over a holiday. This Labor Day weekend, follow these helpful tips to prepare a safe meal for your family and friends.

- Wash Your Hands: Your first defense against foodborne illness is hand-washing. Wash your hands before handling any type of food, and be sure to wash your hands after handling raw meats. Proper hand-washing will help prevent the spread of germs.
- 2. Pack Your Cooler Correctly: Make sure to keep your cold foods cold. You should use a thermometer to check that your food is 41°F or colder. Pack your already cooked and ready-to-eat foods (beverages, produce, fruits, etc.) in a separate cooler than raw meats (i.e. raw hamburger patties). If you are using ice to keep your raw foods cold, don't use the ice for anything else
- 3. **Prepare Raw and Ready-to-Eat Foods Separately:** To minimize the risk of cross-contamination, you should use separate cutting boards for cooked and raw foods. Having colored cutting boards is an easy way to remember which cutting board to use (i.e. red for meats and green for vegetables).
- 4. Use Separate Plates and Utensils for Raw and Cooked Foods: After placing raw chicken breasts, burgers, and other meats on the grill, make sure to switch to clean plates, spatulas, and tongs. You run the risk of cross-contaminating your food if you use the same utensils and surfaces for cooked and uncooked meats.

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5. Cook Food to a Safe Temperature: If not cooked properly, raw meat and poultry may contain bacteria that can cause foodborne illness. Properly cooking your meat can help kill harmful bacteria. Cook your hamburgers to an internal temperature of 155°F for at least 15 seconds. Turkey and chicken must be cooked at 165°F for at least 15 seconds, and steaks and pork chops at 145°F for at least 15 seconds. Be sure to always use a thermometer and measure the middle of the thickest part of your food.

For more information, contact the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health, Division of Environmental Health Services at (800) 442-2283 or visit our website at <a href="https://www.sbcounty.gov/dehs">www.sbcounty.gov/dehs</a>.

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